

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 7 September 2022

Subject: Manchester Our Children Sufficiency Strategy

Report of: Strategic Director (Children and Education Services)

Summary

This report provides the progress of the implementation of the 2020 – 22 Our Children Sufficiency Strategy and shares the new 2022 – 27 Our Children Sufficiency Strategy. The aim of the 2022 – 27 Strategy will be to continue to embed the developed practice, sustaining and progressing the partnership approach to deliver innovative models of accommodation.

This will enable the directorate to maximise the right accommodation for the right children. The Strategy will have governance through, the Children's Leadership Team and the Joint Commissioning Group. It will be delivered alongside and support the Post 2022 Ofsted Inspection Response Action Plan.

We will ensure our children are cared for by skilled and talented people who are passionate about our children, have the right home, in the right place at the right time enabling them to be safe, happy, successful and healthy

We know that there are unprecedented demands on children's social care, the recent reports from the Competition and Markets Authority and the Care Review all share similar concerns regarding the privatisation and profiteering from children's care placements by providers. In Manchester we have worked hard to mitigate this and currently our placement costs are comparable to 2010. We are 'bucking' the national trend in costs and developing an exciting range of provision around our families and children.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:-

- (1) Consider this report and comment on the work to date delivered through the 2020 Sufficiency Strategy; and
 - (2) Consider and comment on the approach and implementation of the 2022 Sufficiency Strategy.
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Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The Strategy will ensure that the directorate delivers inclusive services that meet the needs of our diverse communities, through the commissioning of a diverse range of accommodation, co-producing and developing models with our children and families.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Continuing to improve accommodation will contribute to improving educational outcomes, aspirations and job opportunities for our children and contribute to Manchester's young people becoming happy, safe and successful adults.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	A sufficiency of high quality accommodation for our children will provide the stability to enable future generations to contribute to the City's economic success.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Continuing to improve accommodation will contribute to improving educational outcomes, aspirations and job opportunities for our children and contribute to Manchester's young people becoming happy, safe and successful adults.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for children and families across the city helps build and develop communities.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Investment in accommodation will enhance the City's attractiveness to potential residents and contribute to the development of high quality neighbourhoods.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The proposals within the strategies will manage the cost of accommodation for Children's Services. The cost will be met from the existing children's placements budget.

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

No background documents. The Strategies are published documents

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In September 2020, Manchester published their 2020 – 22 Our Childrens Sufficiency Strategy developing the right services at the right time in the right place. The Strategy was a clear direction to children’s social care providers in relation to how and where Manchester would meet the accommodation needs of our children. Alongside the Strategy we published our Commissioning Behaviours and Principles which embedded our approach towards ethical and trusted providers, sharing how we plan to work together to achieve better outcomes for our children.
- 1.2 The sufficiency strategies have been the collaboration of young people, services, finance, education, housing and health partners. This has strengthened our approach to delivering innovative accommodation model.
- 1.3 This report sets out the progress from the 2020 Strategy and the proposed outcomes of the 2022 Strategy.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Local Authorities have a responsibility under the Sufficiency Duty within the Children's Act 1989, to ensure that they have enough provision to meet the needs of their children and young people who are looked after. To achieve this Manchester works in partnership with young people, their families, providers and partner agencies to ensure that there is a robust and quality choice of accommodation.
- 2.2 The duty to cooperate underpins our role as Corporate Parents and applies to all partners. That services are based on the ‘if this were my child’ principle and starting by making sure young people have a safe and stable place to live, that they are economically sound; with the opportunity and support to be successful.

3.0 Main issues

- 3.1 We know that there are unprecedented demands on children’s social care, the recent reports from the Competition and Markets Authority and the Care Review all share similar concerns regarding the privatisation and profiteering from children’s care placements by providers. In Manchester we have worked hard to mitigate this and currently our placement costs are comparable to 2010. We are ‘bucking’ the national trend in costs and developing an exciting range of provision around our families and children.



We also know that commissioning activity is an enabler of our sufficiency approach.

Placement stability is delivered through the collaboration of finance, education, social care, health and commissioning. If any of the elements are missing or not communicating to each other the young person will be at risk of placement breakdown at home, foster care and or residential. If we do not have placement stability, we will not achieve sufficiency.

3.2 The Commissioning Story Board in Appendix 1 outlines the work that has been completed as part of the 2020 – 22 Strategy. Key outcomes include:

- Managing sufficiency within the allocated budget
- Coproduction of early help and prevention services with care and health, 2 young people have been diverted from care, and families confident to meet their needs, decommissioned service and improved use of existing resource.
- Increased offers of health funded support to wrap around commissioned services, developing joint funded innovative step-down models from hospital and care. Increased funding for complex needs from c400k in 2016 to c£4m in 2021.
- 84 accommodations for care leaver and 36 homes for foster carers identified in new builds across Manchester.
- 2 young people diverted from care through use of innovative joint funded community-based work around obesity.
- Innovative pathways to independence, families enable to live together, two brother having flats next door to each other, early step across from residential. House Project delivery of 23 young people into their forever homes with peer support.
- No children in emergency/B&B accommodation since 2017 and overall placement spend is comparable to those in 2010.
- Reduction in children experiencing 3 moves.
- More children placed in GM/Manchester to maintain relationships/connections greater stability in a safe, secure and loving home
- Only 7% of our children living in a residential setting compared to a national average of circa 11%.
- 80% of support accommodation placements are in Manchester, an increase of 20%

3.3 This has been achieved through Children and Education Services approach to improving the experiences and outcomes of children and budget (cost

avoidance, care planning, commissioning, and efficiencies). Specifically, for the purposes of this report;

- An effective Edge of Care approach (avoiding unnecessary demand/need for placements).
- Focus on 'permanence' and working with children and their families (connected carers and family group conferencing).
- Continual improvement in the capacity and practice of social work staff to engage and plan effectively with and for children.
- Multi agency resource panel and Joint Commissioning Group– provided planning and shared ownership of commissioning activity and risk.
- Post 16 Hub – supporting the pathways to independence and post 18 accommodation.
- Commissioning of the Lodge, foyer model of accommodation and increased working with housing and Homelessness directorates.
- Enabling Independence Accommodation Strategy and Housing Strategy – ensuring that care leavers, vulnerable young people and their families have the right accommodation to meet their needs.
- Social value and ethical procurement embedded across practice. Increasing offers to Manchester and creating value for money. Open book accounting and scoring profit margins as standard.
- Monthly placement oversight clinics across social care and commissioning.
- Commissioning behaviours and strategies giving clear market insight to Manchester's needs.
- Joint working with GM and Health colleagues.
- Creating GM House project collaborative, sharing good practice and creating opportunities for our care leavers placed out of borough.

4.0 Looking to the Future

4.1 The aim of the 2022 – 27 Strategy will be to continue to embed the developed practice, sustaining and progressing the partnership approach to deliver innovate models of accommodation. This will enable the directorate to maximise the right accommodation for the right children. The Strategy will have governance through, the Childrens Leadership Team and the Joint Commissioning Group. It will be delivered alongside and support the Post 2022 Ofsted Inspection Response Action Plan.

4.2 We will ensure our children are cared for by skilled and talented people who are passionate about our children, have the right home, in the right place at the right time enabling them to be safe, happy, successful and healthy by:

- Achieving timely plans of 'permanence' for children and young people.
- Increasing the number of 'our' children who are able to live in Manchester.
- Delivering sufficient quality provision to meet the needs of all children and young people irrespective of cultural or ethnic background.
- Increasing the number of our children living in both internal and externally commissioned family-based care.
- Increasing the number of shared care arrangements where appropriate.

- Increasing our short breaks options including overnights models.
- Developing an increased choice of homes across Manchester with providers of choice.
- Increasing the number and use of Supported Lodgings where appropriate.
- Increased use of the semi-independent accommodation from 17 years and reduce its use for 16 years.
- Increasing the housing options for Care Leavers.

4.3 This will be delivered through the:

- Continued joint Commissioning approaches, funding and governance across health, children and adults social care and public health. Ensuring we are not duplicating resource but adding value, planning together and developing co-production models of commissioning.
- Commissioning additional short breaks, overnight respite and shared care models.
- Implementation of 'Take a breath', Staying Close, Mockingbird initiatives which are innovative approaches to meeting children's care needs; alongside evidenced based models of practice.
- Transparent and improved financial oversight and payment systems.
- Review of what is working well; actively decommissioning models and services which are not performing.
- Implementation of Care Review Recommendations, regional contract and sufficiency models.
- Working in partnership with Manchester's Integrated Care to jointly commissioning transition accommodation for young people with mental health, learning disability and/or autism.

4.4 The delivery model will require investment to ensure our sufficiency needs are met. These will be into the Take a Breath, mockingbird, short breaks overnight respite and the transitions accommodation for LD/autism. The investment will be considered within the budget planning cycle that is currently underway

4.5 These evidenced based invest to save models will ensure we have a quality accommodation models (*Appendix 2*) which can meet the needs of our most complex young people when they need it most. It will enable young people to have greater choice for their move on accommodation, received an integrated delivery model to ensure we understand their needs and enable the young person to achieve stability in their future accommodation I ensure value for money and the ability to meet future demand.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is recommended to:-

1. Consider this report and comment on the work to date delivered through the 2020 Sufficiency Strategy; and
2. Consider and comment on the approach and implementation of the 2022 Sufficiency Strategy.